



Martha Jane Cannary

**This is a biographical work
based on the public domain book**

“LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF CALAMITY JANE”

By Herself

And additional historical sources

with edits, notes, arrangement and additional images

by Larry W Jones

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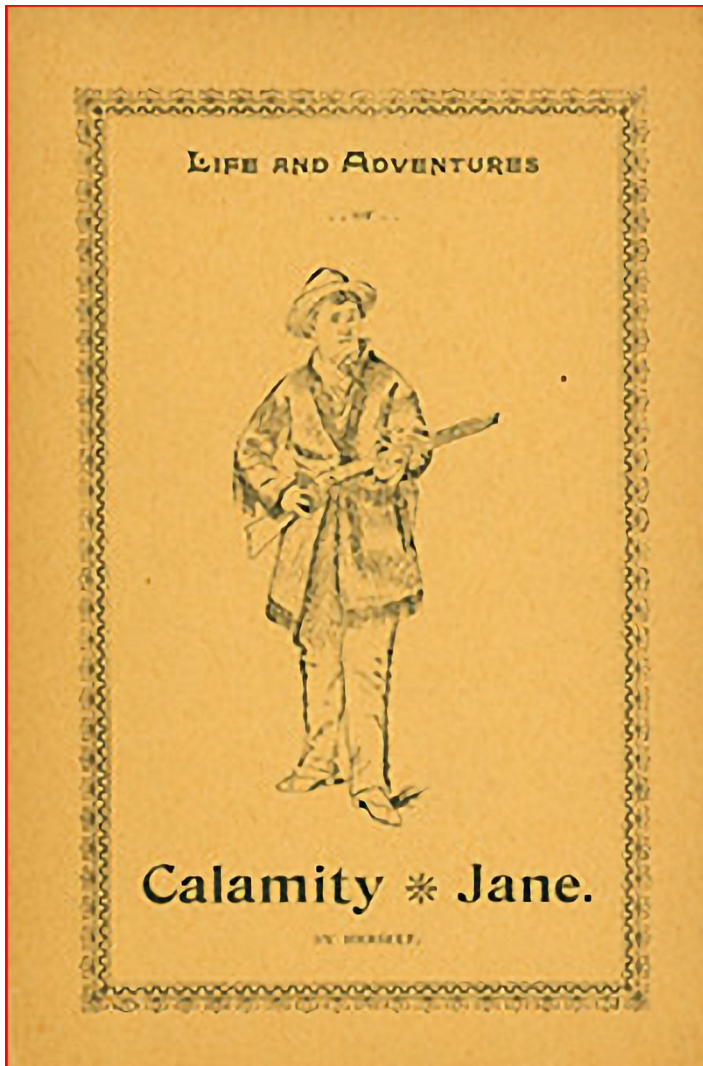
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Much of the information about the early years of Calamity Jane's life comes from an autobiographical booklet that she dictated in 1896 (age 44), written for publicity purposes. It was intended to help attract audiences to a tour she was about to begin, in which she appeared in dime museums around the United States. Some of the information in the pamphlet is exaggerated or even completely inaccurate. While reading, we will examine it piece by piece.



Autobiographical pamphlet 1896

Calamity Jane

Woman Of the Western Plains

LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF CALAMITY JANE – BY HERSELF

My maiden name was Marthy Cannary. I was born in Princeton, Missouri, May 1st, 1852. Father and mother were natives of Ohio. I had two brothers and three sisters, I being the oldest of the children.

Calamity Jane was born on May 1, 1852, as Martha Jane Canary (or Cannary) in Princeton, within Mercer County, Missouri. Her parents were listed in the 1860 census as living about 7 miles northeast of Princeton in Ravanna. Her father Robert Wilson Cannary had a gambling problem, and little is known about her mother Charlotte M. Cannary. Jane was the eldest of six children, and had two brothers and three sisters.

As a child I always had a fondness for adventure and out-door exercise and especial fondness for horses which I began to ride at an early age and continued to do so until I became an expert rider being able to ride the most vicious and stubborn of horses, in fact the greater portion of my life in early times was spent in this manner.

There can be no doubt concerning her horsemanship ability, as will be seen.

In 1865 we emigrated from our homes in Missouri by the over-land route to Virginia City, Montana, taking five months to make the journey. While on the way the greater portion of my time was spent in hunting along with the men and hunters of the party, in fact I was at all times with the men when there was excitement and adventures to be had. By the time we reached Virginia City I was considered a remarkable good shot and a fearless rider for a girl of my age. I remember many occurrences on the journey from Missouri to Montana. Many times in crossing the mountains the conditions of the trail were so bad that we frequently had to lower the wagons over ledges by hand with ropes for they were so rough and rugged that horses were of no use. We also had many exciting times fording streams for many of the streams in our way were noted for quicksands and boggy places, where, unless we were

very careful, we would have lost horses and all. Then we had many dangers to encounter in the way of streams swelling on account of heavy rains. On occasions of that kind the men would usually select the best places to cross the streams, myself on more than one occasion have mounted my pony and swam across the stream several times merely to amuse myself and have had many narrow escapes from having both myself and pony washed away to certain death, but as the pioneers of those days had plenty of courage we overcame all obstacles and reached Virginia City in safety.

Virginia City Montana 1866



Mother died at Black Foot, Montana, 1866, where we buried her.

Charlotte M. Burge Canary (1840 - 1866) Charlotte's date and place of burial (age 25 - 26) are unknown, and while one story is that she "died on the road" of pneumonia while en route to Montana, it is widely accepted that she died about 1866 in Blackfoot, Montana.

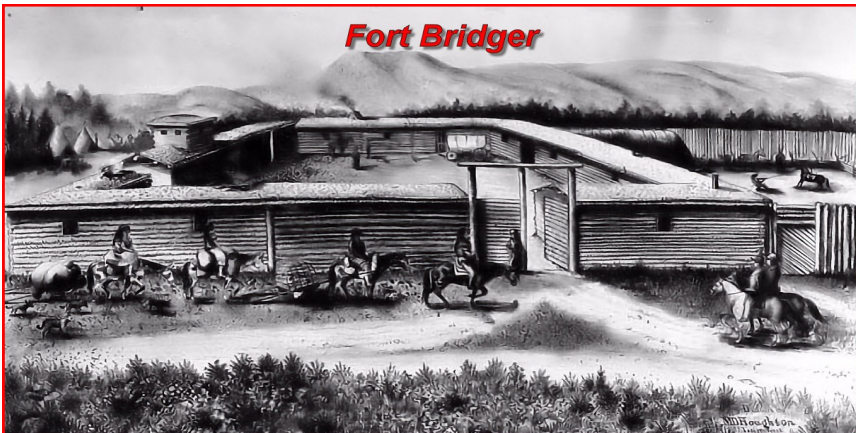
I left Montana in Spring of 1866, for Utah, arriving at Salt Lake city during the summer. Remained in Utah until 1867, where my father died,

After arriving in Virginia City in the spring of 1866, Robert (1825 - 1867) took his six children on to Salt Lake City, Utah. They arrived in the summer, and Robert supposedly started farming on 40 acres of land. The family had been

in Salt Lake City for only a year when he died in 1867 (age 41 – 42). Robert Wilson Canary was born in Missouri about 1825, the son of James & Sarah Canary. He married Charlotte M. Burge on 14 Jun 1855 in Polk County, Iowa. Robert is found in the 1850 census record in Malaga, Monroe, Ohio, USA, living in the home of his father James. Robert is found in the 1860 census record for Ravanna, Mercer, Missouri, living with his wife, 4 children and his father. Robert's father James died in 1862 without a will. After James' death, Robert was sued by family members who alleged that Robert owed money to the family estate. He was ordered to appear in court in 1863, but did not appear. He is presumed to have left Missouri prior to the trial date. Robert appears in a Dec 31, 1864 story in *The Montana Post*, Virginia City, Montana. The story relates that his three daughters were out begging for aid. The story indicates that Robert was a gambler in Nevada (City) Missouri. His wife Charlotte was described as "a woman of the lowest grade". While much has been written on the family, Robert Wilson Canary's date and place of death and burial location remain vague. It is generally agreed that he died about 1867, probably in Salt Lake, Utah.

then went to Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory, where we arrived May 1, 1868,

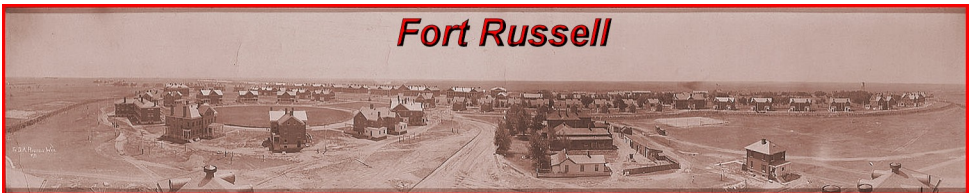
At age 14, Martha Jane took charge of her five younger siblings, loaded up their wagon once more, and took the family to Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory, where they arrived in May 1868. Noted frontiersman Jim Bridger and his partner, Louis Vasquez, established Fort Bridger in 1843 to service emigrant traffic. For the next century, the area—known as the Bridger Valley—served as a crossroads for the Oregon/California Trail, the Mormon Trail, the Pony Express Route, the Transcontinental Railroad and the Lincoln Highway. Today, the valley in southwestern Wyoming is a historic byway, incorporating the small towns of Fort Bridger, Urie, Mountain View and Lyman, which were bypassed when Interstate 80 was built.



then went to Piedmont, Wyoming, with U.P. Railway. From Fort Bridger, they traveled on the Union Pacific Railroad to Piedmont, Wyoming. In Piedmont, Jane took whatever jobs she could find to provide for her large family. She worked as a dishwasher, cook, waitress, dance hall girl, nurse, and ox team driver.

Joined General Custer as a scout at Fort Russell, Wyoming, in 1870, and started for Arizona for the Indian Campaign. Up to this time I had always worn the costume of my sex. When I joined Custer I donned the uniform of a soldier. It was a bit awkward at first but I soon got to be perfectly at home in men's clothes.

Taken from *Los Angeles Herald, Volume XXIX, Number 229, 18 May 1902*. "The Story of "Calamity Jane, Custer's Famous Woman Scout" Notwithstanding the ubiquity of the "pantalooned" heroine in fiction, the well authenticated cases of women who, for a period of years, have successfully masqueraded in men's attire are very few. There is, however, living today in America a woman who served from 1870 to 1876 in the United States army in Arizona, Utah, Wyoming and Montana without her identity's being discovered, acquiring during that time the reputation of being the best shot on the frontier and earning several medals for conspicuous bravery. I refer to Martha Burke, better known as Calamity Jane, soldier, scout, prospector, stage-driver and express-rider who fought with Custer, Sturgis and Crook and other well known generals through the Indian wars of the seventies. and who is at present living in a small village in Eastern New York, the guest of a well known authoress, who is working her over for "material." The exploits in the career of this remarkable woman completely outshine those in the rather doubtful tales of the swashbuckling dames of the past centuries, the more so that these are a hundred men to swear the truth of them and to testify to the daring, the deviltry and temper, and the big-heartedness that mitigate the faults and accentuated the virtues of this Amazon of the plains. Several years ago Mrs. Burke, living in Montana, wrote, or rather dictated—she never having learned to write—a brief account of her life. The few copies printed were quickly sold and those now owning them hold them at fancy figures, valuing them both for their historical beauty and as literary curiosities.



Fort Russell, named for David Allen Russell, a Civil War general, was located in Cheyenne, Wyoming. It was established in 1867 to protect workers for the Union Pacific Railroad.

Calamity Jane

Woman Of the Western Plains

Accounts from this period describe her as being "extremely attractive" and a "pretty, dark-eyed girl." During that time, (age 22), she also began her on-and-off employment as a prostitute at the Fort Laramie Three-Mile Hog Ranch, run by 'madam' Dora Dufran. She moved on to a rougher, mostly outdoor and adventurous life on the Great Plains.

The Fort Laramie Three-Mile Hog Ranch was built to serve as a social center away from the soldiers' post at historic Fort Laramie. It became notorious as a place for gambling, drinking, and prostitution, with at least ten prostitutes always in residence. The Fort Laramie site was one of a number of so-called "hog ranches" that appeared along trails in Wyoming. Located about 3 miles from old Fort Laramie, the ranch was established by Jules Ecoffey and Adolph Cuny as a trading post and saloon. Prostitution was added as a further attraction. One of the young prostitutes was said to be Martha Jane Cannary, more popularly known in later years as Calamity Jane. The Cheyenne and Black Hills Stagecoach Company operated a hotel for stagecoach passengers, which apparently coexisted with the bordello, both operating until the stage line was abandoned in 1887. It had eight "cribs" or two-room cabins for prostitutes, shops, and a pool hall. The Fort Laramie Three-Mile Hog Ranch was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

Fort Laramie Three-Mile Hog Ranch



Was in Arizona up to the winter of 1871 and during that time I had a great many adventures with the Indians, for as a scout I had a great many dangerous missions to perform and while I was in many close places always succeeded in getting away safely for by this time I was considered the most reckless and daring rider and one of the best shots in the western country. Cannary contended she traveled with George A. Custer in 1871 to Arizona where she encountered “a great many adventures working as a scout.” Historian Dan L. Thrapp says in *"Encyclopedia of Frontier Biography, Volume 1: A-F."* “there is no record she was a scout,” adding that “...Custer never was in Arizona, nor was Jane at this time.” No records are available that prove she drew a paycheck as a scout. Much of what we know about this rugged, skilled, and independent wanderer comes from her storytelling.

After that campaign I returned to Fort Sanders, Wyoming, remained there until spring of 1872, when we were ordered out to the Muscle Shell or Nursey Pursey Indian outbreak. In that war Generals Custer, Miles, Terry and Crook were all engaged. This campaign lasted until fall of 1873. From *"Life and Death at The Mouth of the Musselshell 1868-1872"* diary of C.M. Lee, gunsmith, merchant. Synopsis: During the period covered by Lee's journal, Fort Musselshell played a significant role in the history of the territory's dynamic change from absolute wilderness to an area of major contention for dominance involving the Native Americans frequenting the area as well as the post Civil War whites who came to the territory in pursuit of wealth. For a time, Fort Musselshell and its people literally caught the attention of anyone who traversed the area. It was a business enterprise, a home, a haven, a stop-along-the-way for travelers on the Missouri River steamboats, plus a target of incessant raids by the varying Native American peoples in the area at the time – several bands of Sioux, Assiniboine, Gros Ventre, two groups of Crow, and others, who stopped by either to trade or to steal and kill. From Lee's journals we realize that those at Fort Musselshell at the time were never sure of which option they would experience on any given day. The journal is literally laden with the day-to-day travails of boredom heightened by repetitive and terrorizing attacks by the Sioux or Assiniboine as well as those living at Fort Musselshell having to cope with an incredibly harsh, sometimes brutal natural environment.

With regard to Indians through whose territories the northern rail line would run, in 1872 William Welsh, the former chairman of the Board of Indian Commissioners, supported the creation of the Northern Pacific Railroad as it would “bring the lawless Indians of the North into subjection, and thus aid effectively the religious bodies charged with bringing Christian civilization.” In 1872, surveyors were sent out from Fort Rice and from Fort Ellis under military escort to survey the placement of the railroad through the Yellowstone country. This was a direct affront to the Sioux and their allies.

Calamity Jane

Woman Of the Western Plains

It was during this campaign that I was christened Calamity Jane. It was on Goose Creek, Wyoming, where the town of Sheridan is now located. Capt. Egan was in command of the Post. We were ordered out to quell an uprising of the Indians, and were out for several days, had numerous skirmishes during which six of the soldiers were killed and several severely wounded. When on returning to the Post we were ambushed about a mile and a half from our destination. When fired upon Capt. Egan was shot. I was riding in advance and on hearing the firing turned in my saddle and saw the Captain reeling in his saddle as though about to fall. I turned my horse and galloped back with all haste to his side and got there in time to catch him as he was falling. I lifted him onto my horse in front of me and succeeded in getting him safely to the Fort. Capt. Egan on recovering, laughingly said: "I name you Calamity Jane, the heroine of the plains." I have borne that name up to the present time. Captain Jack Crawford served under Generals Wesley Merritt and George Crook. According to the *Montana Anaconda Standard* of April 19, 1904, he stated that Calamity Jane "never saw service in any capacity under either General Crook or General Miles. She never saw a lynching and never was in an Indian fight. She was simply a notorious character, dissolute and devilish, but possessed a generous streak which made her popular." A popular belief is that she instead acquired it as a result of her warnings to men that to offend her was to "court calamity". It is possible that "Jane" was not part of her name until the nickname was coined for her. It is certain, however, that she was known by that nickname by 1876, because the arrival of the Hickok wagon train was reported in Deadwood's newspaper, the *Black Hills Pioneer*, on July 15, 1876, with the headline: "Calamity Jane has arrived!"

Taken from "*Federal Writers' Project*" CALAMITY JANE

Guy Rader March 20, 1939

Calamity Jane lived in the west when it was newly settled country. There were many hardships for the people. Gold discoveries made pioneer life exciting. Indian wars sometimes made it dangerous. There was much hostility from the Indians to whom the white settlers were intruders. On both sides there was bravery and courage. Long afterward these became the basis of frontier stories. Many stories have been told about Calamity Jane. Not all of them are true. But even those that are legends tell us something of her adventurous life on the frontier.

After a campaign against the Indians in Arizona, she came north with General Custer. The Northern Pacific Railway was surveying a route through the Sioux country at this time, but Chief Red Cloud and his people did not want the railroad built. They knew that white people would settle on the land, plow the grass under and kill the game. Red Cloud and the Sioux took the warpath against the whites. There were several small battles; six soldiers were killed and a number severely wounded.

One hot summer afternoon in 1872 Jane Canary rode a sweaty horse into the Goose Creek bottoms, near the present site of Sheridan, Wyoming. She was dressed as a man, in the blue uniform of the U. S. Cavalry. For several days she had been riding hard, with scarcely enough time out of the saddle to sleep. About half a mile behind her was a cloud of dust raised by the soldiers under Captain Egan, the commander of the army post on Goose Creek. They had been looking for Indians who had struggled against the white people's coming. As she rode wearily along, Jane suddenly heard behind her the sound of guns. At the first shot her pony raised its ears. Other shots followed rapidly, and then the distant war whoop of the Sioux. A war party had hidden in the willows and brush along Goose Creek only two miles from the Army Post. Nobody expected them to be so near. The soldiers rode off the hills and along the bottom land, into the trap set for them by the Sioux, whose bullets caught them unprepared.

The young scout whirled her horse and raced back to the command. This ambush was her fault, she thought, since she had not discovered the Sioux and warned the soldiers. But who would expect Indians within two miles of the fort? With no cover from which to fight, the soldiers began to retreat. Several were killed or wounded. Captain Egan himself was hit, and swayed in the saddle, so weak that in another minute he would fall. The Indians rushed forward to capture him. Horses snorted and squealed. Men shouted. The soldiers tried to escape toward the fort, not certain how many Sioux had attacked them. The young scout clenched her teeth. Somebody had to help the captain. Jane urged her horse forward. She reached Captain Egan just as he fell from the saddle. She lifted him to her horse, and spurred ahead. The Sioux were very close, yelling savagely. Bullets cut through her clothing and whizzed by her head, but Jane was unable to fire back because it took both her hands to hold the captain in the saddle. She could only grit her teeth and spur her horse. Heading for the fort, she managed to get beyond range of the Sioux bullets. Soon she had the captain safe inside the post. For several days Captain Egan was confined to his bed. The army surgeon cared for his wounds and nursed him back to health. When the scout who had saved his life entered his room, the captain held out his hand. "Calamity Jane, the heroine of the plains," he said, laughing. "Wherever there is calamity or danger to face, that is where you always ride."

We were afterwards ordered to Fort Custer, where Custer city now stands, where we arrived in the spring of 1874; remained around Fort Custer all summer and were ordered to Fort Russell in fall of 1874, where we remained until spring of 1875; was then ordered to the Black Hills to protect miners, as that country was controlled by the Sioux Indians and the government had to send the soldiers to protect the lives of the miners and settlers in that section. Remained there until fall of 1875 and wintered at Fort Laramie. In spring of 1876, we were ordered north with General Crook to join Gen'l's Miles, Terry and Custer at Big Horn river. During this march I swam the Platte river at Fort Fetterman as I was the bearer of important dispatches. I had a ninety mile ride to make, being wet and cold, I contracted a severe illness and was sent back in Gen. Crook's ambulance to Fort Fetterman where I laid in the hospital for fourteen days. When able to ride I started for Fort Laramie where I met Wm. Hickock, better known as Wild Bill, and we started for Deadwood, where we arrived about June.

From Jucovy, Linda *Searching for Calamity: The Life and Times of Calamity Jane*. The second part of her story is verified. She was at Fort Laramie in July 1876, and she did join a wagon train that included Wild Bill Hickok. That was where she first met Hickok, contrary to her later claims, and that was how she happened to come to Deadwood.

(Note) Fort Fetterman was constructed in 1867 by the United States Army on the Great Plains frontier in Dakota Territory, approximately 11 miles northwest of present-day Douglas, Wyoming. Located high on the bluffs south of the North Platte River, it served as a major base for the start of several United States military expeditions against warring Native American tribes.



Calamity Jane

Woman Of the Western Plains

During the month of June I acted as a pony express rider carrying the U.S. mail between Deadwood and Custer, a distance of fifty miles, over one of the roughest trails in the Black Hills country. As many of the riders before me had been held up and robbed of their packages, mail and money that they carried, for that was the only means of getting mail and money between these points.

It was considered the most dangerous route in the Hills, but as my reputation as a rider and quick shot was well known, I was molested very little, for the toll gatherers looked on me as being a good fellow, and they knew that I never missed my mark. I made the round trip every two days which was considered pretty good riding in that country. Remained around Deadwood all that summer visiting all the camps within an area of one hundred miles.

Calamity Jane accompanied the Newton–Jenney Party into Rapid City in 1875, along with California Joe and Valentine McGillicuddy. In 1876, Calamity Jane settled in the area of Deadwood, South Dakota, in the Black Hills.

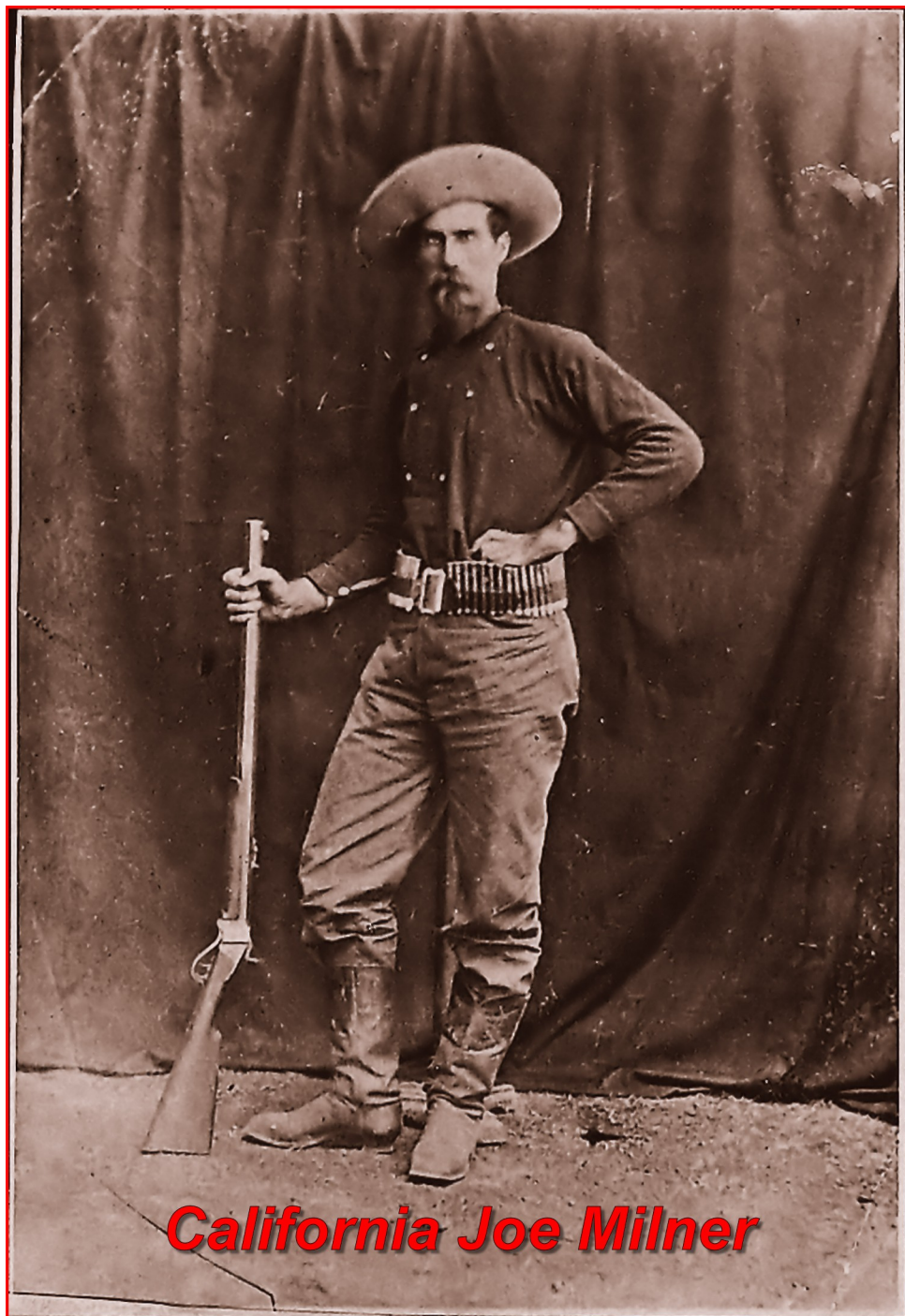
(Note) The Newton–Jenney Party of 1875, led by Henry Newton and Walter P. Jenney, and escorted by a military detachment led by Lieutenant Colonel Richard I. Dodge, and known also as the Jenney-Newton Party, was a scientific expedition sponsored by the United States Geological Survey to map the Black Hills of South Dakota.

The Newton-Jenney expedition was established in response to the Black Hills Gold Rush, which had been escalated the previous year by General George Armstrong Custer's expedition into the Black Hills. The Newton–Jenney Party included many figures who would gain notoriety in the 19th century, including Calamity Jane, Dr. Valentine McGillicuddy, and California Joe Milner.

The expedition confirmed Custer's claims of gold and prompted an increase of miners in the Black Hills region, which in turn antagonized events leading to the Great Sioux War of 1876-77.



Dr. Valentine T. McGillicuddy and his wife Fanny



California Joe Milner

My friend, Wild Bill, remained in Deadwood during the summer with the exception of occasional visits to the camps. On the 2nd of August, while setting at a gambling table in the Bell Union saloon, in Deadwood, he was shot in the back of the head by the notorious Jack McCall, a desperado. I was in Deadwood at the time and on hearing of the killing made my way at once to the scene of the shooting and found that my friend had been killed by McCall. I at once started to look for the assassin and found him at Shurdy's butcher shop and grabbed a meat cleaver and made him throw up his hands; through the excitement on hearing of Bill's death, having left my weapons on the post of my bed. He was then taken to a log cabin and locked up, well secured as every one thought, but he got away and was afterwards caught at Fagan's ranch on Horse Creek, on the old Cheyenne road and was then taken to Yankton, Dak., where he was tried, sentenced and hung.

John McCall; (1852/1853 – March 1, 1877), also known as "Crooked Nose" or "Broken Nose Jack", was the murderer of Old West legend Wild Bill Hickok. McCall shot Hickok from behind as he played poker at Nuttal & Mann's Saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory on August 2, 1876. McCall was executed for the murder on March 1, 1877. Many details of McCall's life are unknown. He was most likely born in the early 1850s in Jefferson County, Kentucky. McCall was raised in Kentucky with three sisters and eventually drifted west to become a buffalo hunter.[1][2] By 1876, he was living in a gold mining camp outside Deadwood, under the alias "Bill Sutherland".

McCall was intoxicated while drinking alcohol at Nuttal & Mann's saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, on August 1, 1876, when one of the players dropped out of a poker game that included "Wild Bill" Hickok. The inebriated McCall quickly took his place. McCall proceeded to lose several hands, and was soon out of money. Hickok offered McCall money to buy breakfast and advised him not to play again until he could cover his losses. Though McCall accepted the money, he reportedly felt insulted.

The following day on August 2, 1876, another poker game was taking place at the saloon. On this particular evening, Hickok had his back to the door, in contrast to his normal practice of sitting in a corner to protect his back. Among the players at the table (sitting in the corner) was Charles Rich, who refused Hickok's request to switch seats. Hickok reluctantly took the empty seat and joined the game, which was a fatal mistake. A drunken McCall entered the saloon, and ordered a drink from the bar. He proceeded to move down the bar, and stopped a few steps behind Hickok, as if to look at the hand he had been dealt. Not noticing McCall, Hickok said to another player, "The old duffer. He broke me on the hand," his final words.

McCall shot Hickok in the back of the head with a single-action .45-caliber revolver, shouting "Damn you! Take that!" Hickok died instantly. McCall ran out the back door of the saloon and tried to make his escape on a horse, but the saddle was loose, causing McCall to fall off. He was apprehended by several men shortly after. An impromptu court was called to order with the prosecution, defense, and jury made up of local miners and businessmen.

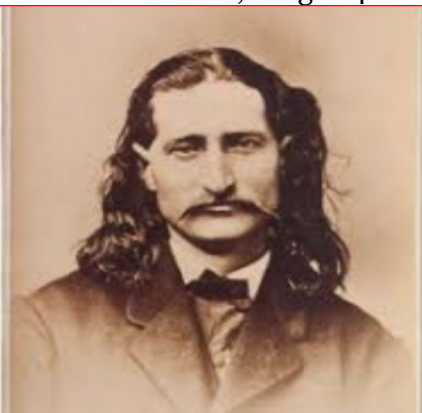
On trial the next day in McDaniel's Theater, McCall claimed his actions were in retribution for Hickok having previously killed his brother in Abilene, Kansas. McCall was found not guilty after two hours. The verdict brought the Black Hills Pioneer to editorialize: "Should it ever be our misfortune to kill a man... we would simply ask that our trial may take place in some of the mining camps of these hills.

Fearing for his safety, McCall soon left the area and headed into Wyoming Territory, where he repeatedly bragged at local saloons about killing Hickok in a "fair" gunfight. But Wyoming authorities refused to recognize the result of McCall's acquittal on the grounds that the court in Deadwood had no legal jurisdiction. Because Deadwood was not under a legally constituted law enforcement or court system, officials argued that McCall could be tried for murder again. Agreeing, the federal court in Yankton, Dakota Territory, declared that double jeopardy did not apply, and set a date for a retrial.

The trial began on December 4, 1876. No witnesses were called for the defense, and the guilty verdict came in at 10:15 p.m. on December 6. McCall stated that he had been heavily intoxicated at the time of the murder and did not remember any details of the event. He requested a new trial, as well as claimed that his name was not really Jack McCall, and that he had changed it when he left home as a child. Judge Granville Bennett did not believe his story and sentenced McCall to death by hanging. At 10:15 a.m. on March 1, 1877, McCall was hanged in a public execution in Yankton, at age 24.



"CROOKED NOSE" JOHN "JACK" McCALL



"WILD BILL" JAMES BUTLER HICKOK

Calamity Jane

Woman Of the Western Plains

I remained around Deadwood locating claims, going from camp to camp until the spring of 1877, where one morning, I saddled my horse and rode towards Crook city. I had gone about twelve miles from Deadwood, at the mouth of Whitewood creek, when I met the overland mail running from Cheyenne to Deadwood. The horses on a run, about two hundred yards from the station; upon looking closely I saw they were pursued by Indians. The horses ran to the barn as was their custom. As the horses stopped I rode along side of the coach and found the driver John Slaughter, lying face downwards in the boot of the stage, he having been shot by the Indians. When the stage got to the station the Indians hid in the bushes. I immediately removed all baggage from the coach except the mail. I then took the driver's seat and with all haste drove to Deadwood, carrying the six passengers and the dead driver.

From "*WOMEN IN HISTORY - Living vignettes of notable women from U.S. history*" Following McCall's execution for the crime, Jane continued living in the Deadwood area for some time, and at one point she helped save numerous passengers in an overland stagecoach by diverting several Plains Indians who were in pursuit of the vehicle. Stagecoach driver John Slaughter was killed during the pursuit, and Jane took over the reins and drove the stage on to its destination at Deadwood.

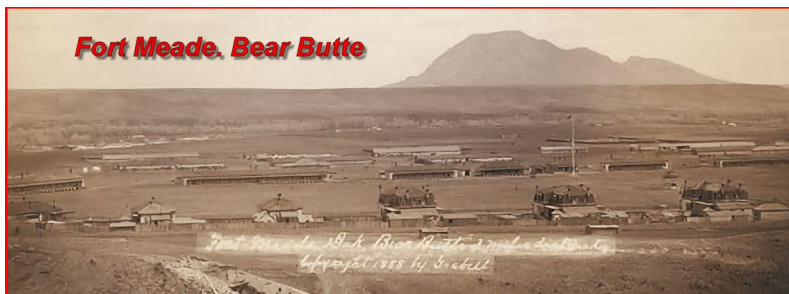
From "*Wyoming Postscripts*" On March 25, 1877, Johnny Slaughter became the first driver killed on the Cheyenne-Deadwood stage line. "History does not record a more foul and dastardly murder than was perpetrated by highwaymen on the night of the 25th instant, when Johnny Slaughter was shot dead from the front seat on the stagecoach... When we consider that this affair happened within two and one half miles of [Deadwood], a city boasting a population of three or four thousand, and within a stone's throw of several miners' cabins, we are surprised at the boldness of the attack and offer up a prayer for the speedy extermination of the vile perpetrators of such horrid deeds." Slaughter was the well-liked 25 year old son of Judge John Slaughter, then City Marshall of Cheyenne. The family had come to Cheyenne in 1867-68 as some of the first settlers in town. While the death of any stage driver would have caused a stir, Johnny's in particular made an impact on the area's sense of security and stirred up the community to action against highwaymen.



Stagecoach near Chugwater Wyoming driver - George Lathrop

I left Deadwood in the fall of 1877, and went to Bear Butte Creek with the 7th Cavalry. During the fall and winter we built Fort Meade and the town of Sturgis. In 1878 I left the command and went to Rapid city and put in the year prospecting.

Fort Meade is a former United States Army post located just east of Sturgis, South Dakota. The fort was active from 1878 to 1944. Fort Meade was established in 1878 to protect illegal white settlements on the Great Sioux Reservation in the northern Black Hills, especially the nearby gold mining area around Deadwood. Several stage and freighting routes passed through Fort Meade en route to Deadwood.



Fort Meade, Bear Butte

*Fort Meade, Black River, South Dakota
Copyright 1888 by S. A. Bell*

In 1881 I went to Wyoming and returned in 1882 to Miles city and took up a ranch on the Yellow Stone, raising stock and cattle, also kept a way side inn, where the weary traveler could be accommodated with food, drink, or trouble if he looked for it.

From *The River Press, Benton, Montana, Wednesday November 29, 1882.* "Calamity Jane Settled Down." The report that reached Deadwood some time ago to the effect that Calamity Jane had been induced by domestic infelicities to return to the purlieus of Miles City society, it seems is unfounded. One of the party who came in from that camp with Evans' mule train, and who knew Calamity in the Hills, assures us that she is still with her husband, living on a ranch in the Yellostone valley, below Miles City, and that she has been blessed with an issue in the form of a bright looking baby boy, which she calles Little Calamity, as she has been unable to find a name nice enough for him.

Calamity assured our informant that she had been thoroughly regenerated, and that during the balance of her days she intended to live a quiet, domestic, granger life, only visiting the town occasionally to hear the band play. She allowed there is nothing in gypsieing around on the frontier; that she had become tired of it, and that there was only solid comfortin training up little calamities for the presidency of the United States. At this point she raised her little bundle of humanity to her face, and between kisses explained: "Muzzie's little snoozie darling knows that much, so he does." Everybody in the Hills, as everybody knows Calamity, will be pleased to learn of her new life, and to know that she enjoys it." - Deadwood Pioneer

Left the ranch in 1883, went to California, going through the States and territories, reached Ogden the latter part of 1883, and San Francisco in 1884. Left San Francisco in the summer of 1884 for Texas, stopping at Fort Yuma, Arizona, the hottest spot in the United States. Stopping at all points of interest until I reached El Paso in the fall. While in El Paso, I met Mr. Clinton Burk, a native of Texas, who I married in August 1885.

As I thought I had travelled through life long enough alone and thought it was about time to take a partner for the rest of my days. We remained in Texas leading a quiet home life until 1889. On October 28th, 1887, I became the mother of a girl baby, the very image of its father, at least that is what he said, but who has the temper of its mother.

When we left Texas we went to Boulder, Colo., where we kept a hotel until 1893, after which we travelled through Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, then back to Montana, then to Dakota, arriving in Deadwood October 9th, 1895, after an absence of seventeen years.

From "*WOMEN IN HISTORY - Living vignettes of notable women from U.S. history*" Biographers tend to think Jane's marriage occurred sometime in the 1890s; one source dates it at September 25, 1891. While she did not write of any other men, or children, evidence exists that she was involved with a Robert Dorsett in the 1880s. And a court record from November 1888 states that "Charles Townley, an unmarried man, and Jane Doe, alias Calamity Jane, an unmarried woman, [did at times] unlawfully bed, cohabit and live together ... without being then and there married." Apparently she also had relationships with a Wyoming rancher named King and a William Steers. Nothing more is written anywhere of her baby girl, or her name, even in Jane's memoirs. (Although one woman, Jane McCormick, claimed to be her daughter, but this claim is questionable.)

My arrival in Deadwood after an absence of so many years created quite an excitement among my many friends of the past, to such an extent that a vast number of the citizens who had come to Deadwood during my absence who had heard so much of Calamity Jane and her many adventures in former years were anxious to see me. Among the many whom I met were several gentlemen from eastern cities who advised me to allow myself to be placed before the public in such a manner as to give the people of the eastern cities an opportunity of seeing the Woman Scout who was made so famous through her daring career in the West and Black Hill countries.

Hoping that this little history of my life may interest all readers, I remain as in the older days,

Yours, Mrs. M. BURK - BETTER KNOWN AS CALAMITY JANE

END – Autobiography of Calamity Jane

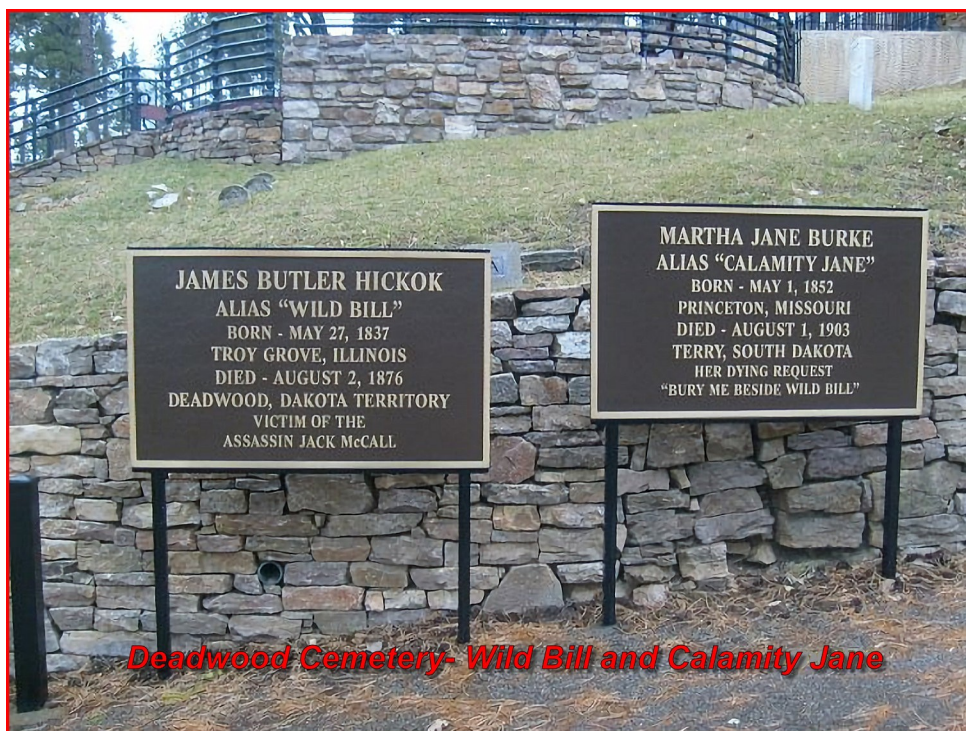
In 1893, Calamity Jane started to appear in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show as a storyteller. She also participated in the 1901 Pan-American Exposition. Her addiction to liquor was evident even in her younger years. For example, on June 10, 1876, she rented a horse and buggy in Cheyenne for a one-mile joy ride to Fort Russell and back, but she was so drunk that she passed right by her destination without noticing it and finally ended up about 90 miles away at Fort Laramie.

Jane returned to the Black Hills in the spring (April/May) of 1903, where brothel owner Madame Dora DuFran was still running her business. For the next few months, Jane earned her keep by cooking and doing the laundry for Dora's girls in Belle Fourche. In late July, Jane traveled by ore train to Terry, South Dakota, a small mining village near Deadwood.

It was reported that she had been drinking heavily while on board the train and had fallen ill. The conductor, S. G. Tillett, carried her off the train, a bartender secured a room for her at the Calloway Hotel, and a physician was summoned. Jane's condition deteriorated quickly, and she died at the hotel on Saturday, August 1, 1903, from inflammation of the bowels and pneumonia.

A bundle of unsent letters to her daughter was allegedly found among Jane's few belongings. The letters were first made public by Jean McCormick as part of her claim to be the daughter of Jane and Hickok, but their authenticity is not accepted by some, largely because there is ample evidence that Jane was functionally illiterate.

Calamity Jane was buried at Mount Moriah Cemetery, South Dakota, next to Bill Hickok. Four of the men who planned her funeral later stated that Hickok had "absolutely no use" for Jane while he was alive, so they decided to play a posthumous joke on him by burying her by his side. Another account states: "in compliance with Jane's dying requests, the Society of Black Hills Pioneers took charge of her funeral and burial in Mount Moriah Cemetery beside Wild Bill. Not just old friends, but the morbidly curious and many who would not have acknowledged Calamity Jane when she was alive, overflowed the First Methodist Church for the funeral services on August 4 and followed the hearse up the steep winding road to Deadwood's boot hill."





About the Author

Larry W Jones is a songwriter, having penned over 7,700 song lyrics. Published in 22 volumes of island themed, country, cowboy, western and bluegrass songs. The entire assemblage is the world's largest collection of lyrics written by an individual songwriter.

As a wrangler on the “Great American Horse Drive”, at age 68, he assisted in driving 800 half-wild horses 62 miles in two days, from Winter pasture grounds in far NW Colorado to the Big Gulch Ranch outside of Craig Colorado.

His book, “The Oldest Greenhorn”, chronicles the adventures and perils in earning the “Gate-to-Gate” trophy belt buckle the hard way.



Other books published by Larry W Jones:

A Squirrel Named Julie and The Fox Ridge Fox
 The Painting Of A Dream
 The Boy With Green Thumbs and The Wild Tree Man
 Red Cloud – Chief Of the Sioux
 Spotted Tail – The Orphan Negotiator
 Little Crow – The Fur Trapper's Patron
 Chief Gall – The Strategist
 Crazy Horse – The Vision Quest Warrior
 Sitting Bull - The Powder River Power
 Rain-In-The-Face – The Setting Sun Brave
 Two Strike – The Lakota Club Fighter
 Chief American Horse – The Oglala Councilor
 Chief Dull Knife – The Sharp-Witted Cheyenne
 Chief Joseph – Retreat From Grande Ronde
 The Oregon Trail Orphans
 Kids In Bloom Volume 1
 Kids In Bloom Volume 2
 Kids Animal Pals Volume 1
 Kids Animal Pals Volume 2
 Bird Kids Volume 1
 Bird Kids Volume 2
 Garden Kids Volume 1
 Garden Kids Volume 2
 Folklore Of Jackson Hole
 Henny Penny Meets Chicken Little
 Delightful Stories For Children
 The 1825 Voyage Of HMS Blonde
 Illustrated Stories For Young Children
 Sea Sagas – Perilous Voyages
 Songbirds And Their Stories
 The Jungle Book – Mowgli's Brothers
 The Jungle Book – Kaa's Hunting
 The Jungle Book – Tiger! Tiger!
 The Jungle Book – The White Seal
 The Jungle Book – Rikki-Tikki-Tavi
 The Jungle Book – Toomai of the Elephants
 The Jungle Book – Her Majesty's Servants
 The Oldest Greenhorn – Second Edition
 Life On The Mississippi
 Songs Of The Seas
 Treasure Island
 The Wind In The Willows

Other books published by Larry W Jones:

Alice In Wonderland
 Peter Rabbit
 The Secret Garden
 Heidi
 Cynthia Ann Parker – Comanche Bride
 Black Beauty
 The Call Of the Wild
 Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit
 Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
 The Goodnight-Loving Trail – A Chuckwagon Saga
 Ode To Toulee – From Gosling To Goose
 China Clipper – Floatplanes Of Pan Am
 Images Of Old England
 Range Of A Cowboy
 Clipper Ships – Emigrants Passage
 Clipper Ships – Wool and Wealth
 Clipper Ships – Iron Maidens
 Clipper Ships – The Kiwi Connection
 Chief War Eagle – Peacemaker Of The Sioux
 Ohiyesa – From Sioux To Surgeon
 Indian Ways Of Yore – Fables And Fact
 Heritage Of An Indian Boy
 Daniel Boone On the Cumberland Trail
 Davy Crockett Of the Wild Frontier
 Jim Bowie – Life Legacy Legend
 Sam Houston – Tennessee To Texas
 Shackleton – Polar Quest
 Death Valley Days – The Manly Trail
 Pocahontas – Powhatan Princess
 Tecumseh – The Roaming Cherokee
 Hunga Tonga – The Volcano!
 Otaheite 1769 – Log Of Captain Cook
 How Texas Got Its Shape
 First Nations – Eskimo
 Pontiac and the Ottawa Wars
 Last Of The Wampanoag
 Osceola And The Seminole Sorrow
 Squanto – The Patuxet Pilgrim
 Wreck Of the Charles Eaton
 Courthouses Of Texas
 Mother Goose Rhymes – The Complete Collection
 English Gardens – The Estates

Other books published by Larry W Jones:

Log Of Captain Bligh – Mutiny and Survival
Four Voyages Of Christopher Columbus
Expedition Of Cabeza de Vaca
Expedition Of Hernando de Soto
Expedition Of Coronado
Billy the Grizzly
Kidnapped – The Inheritance
Animal Friends Of the Timberlands
Chief Red Jacket – The Orator
Chief Black Hawk – Sauk Clan Leader
The Pied Piper Of Hamelin
How Polynesia Became French
Texas Poisonous Snakes
Rocky Mountain Jim From Muggins Gulch
Buffalo Bill When The West Was Wild
Buffalo Jones – Saving the Yellowstone Bison
All his publications are available on Lulu.com